

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 9751

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT MPOL CH
SUBJECT: "LEARN FROM THE GOOD EIGHTH COMPANY OF NANKING ROAD"

REF: HONG KONG 9604

1. REMINISCENT OF ACTIVE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY (PLA) INVOLVEMENT IN THE CIVILIAN POLITICAL PROCESS IN THE LATE 1960'S, PLA UNITS THROUGHOUT CHINA ARE BEING CALLED UPON TO "LEARN FROM THE GOOD EIGHTH COMPANY OF NANKING ROAD" BY GOING INTO SOCIETY TO ACTIVELY CRITICIZE TENG HSIAO-PING AND COMBAT REVISIONISM. ARTICLES IN THE NATIONAL PRESS, INCLUDING SEVERAL IN PEOPLE'S DAILY AND A LIBERATION ARMY DAILY AUGUST 10 EDITORIAL AS WELL AS PROVINCIAL BROADCASTS HAVE HELD UP THE COMPANY AS A MODEL IN LEADING CRITICISM OF TENG'S BOURGEOIS LINE. THE COMPANY, FOUNDED IN 1949 IN SHANGHAI AND GIVEN ITS PRESENT TITLE IN 1963, HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS THE LEADING UNIT TO STRUGGLE AGAINST TENG, HAVING BEGUN CRITICISM OF HIS
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"RIGHTIST REVISIONIST WIND" AS EARLY AS LAST DECEMBER.

2. ACCORDING TO THE AUGUST 10 EDITORIAL, THE GOOD EIGHT COMPANY IS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW PLA UNITS SHOULD GO INTO SOCIETY TO FIGHT AGAINST BOURGEOIS RESTORATION AT HOME AS WELL AS BEING PREPARED AGAINST AN EXTERNAL THREAT TO CHINESE NATIONAL SECURITY. THE ARMY, THEN, MUST BE TRANSFORMED INTO "A VIGOROUS VANGUARD ORGANIZATION CAPABLE OF LEADING THE MASSES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE CLASS ENEMY." THROUGHOUT THE BROADCASTS, HOWEVER, THERE IS LITTLE MENTION OF TENG'S "MILITARY LINE" IN CONTRAST TO OTHER MEDIA ARTICLES WHICH HAVE BEEN CRITICAL OF TENG'S ATTEMPTS TO "RECTIFY" THE ARMY (REFTEL).

3. WHILE AN AUGUST 4-13 CANTON MILITARY REGION SYMPOSIUM, ATTEMDED BY HSU SHIH-YU AND WEI KUO-CHING, PLACED HEAVY EMPHASIS ON TRADITIONAL MILITARY TASKS, LOCAL PLA UNITS WERE CALLED UPON TO LEAD THE STRUGGLE AGAINST TENG IN SOCIETY IN THE "REVOLUTIONARY SPIRIT OF DARING TO GO AGAINST THE TIDE." IN A SIMILAR FASHION, BROADCASTS FROM OTHER PROVINCES ARE CALLING FOR PLA UNITS TO EMULATE THE GOOD EIGHTH COMPANY IN "RESTRICTING BOURGEOIS RIGHTS" TO CARRY OUT THE "POLITICAL TASKS OF THE REVOLUTION."

4. COMMENT: THE EXTENSIVE PUBLICITY SURROUNDING THE PLA'S GOOD EIGHTH COMPANY, ORIGINALLY A MODEL OF RESISTANCE TO THE "SUGAR-COATED BULLETS" OF SOFT CITY LIFE, COMES AT A TIME WHEN TENG IS BEING SOUNDLY CRITICIZED FOR HIS EFFORTS TO BLOCK AND DISBAND THE URBAN MILITIA. IN CONTRAST TO PUBLICITY SURROUNDING MILITIA PARTICIPATION IN THE ANTI-TENG CAMPAIGN, A POSSIBLE ATTEMPT TO OFFSET THE POWERFUL INFLUENCE OF THE PLA) THE CALL FOR ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF THE PLA IN "GOING INTO SOCIETY"--THE SCHOOLS, THE FACTORIES, AND INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE--COULD BE DESIGNED TO BOLSTER PROVINCIAL POLITICAL AUTHORITY. IN THE PRESENT SITUATION, THE PLA COULD ACT TO RESTORE AUTHORITY IN THOSE LOCALITIES SUFFERING FROM ACUTE FACTIONALISM AND LABOR PROBLEMS, PARTICULARLY IN CHEKIANG, FUKIEN AND YUNNAN PROVINCES WHERE PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES HAVE APPARENTLY BEEN UNABLE TO ACT DECISIVELY.

5. WHILE WE DO NOT FEEL THAT PLA INVOLVEMENT IN THE CIVILIAN
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POLITICAL PROCESS AT THE CENTER IS LIKELY TO RETURN TO ITS CULTURAL REVOLUTION LEVELS, THE PLA IS THE MAINSTAY OF EARTHQUAKE RELIEF ACTIVITIES IN HOPEI (IN CONTRAST TO THE LACK OF PUBLICITY GIVEN TO THE MILITIA) AND IS BEGINNING TO TAKE ON AN ACTIVE POLITICAL ROLE IN THE CAMPAIGN OUTSIDE OF THE QUAKE AREA. THIS SUGGESTS SOME INDIVIDUALS MAY BE SUCCESSFULLY ARGUING (REFTEL) THAT THE VOLATILE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE IN THE PROVINCES GENERATED BY THE CAMPAIGN NECESSITATES A STRONG REASSERTION OF

AUTHORITY.

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